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ABSTRACT

Although some genuine problems and disadvantages exist in small schools, educators have begun to rediscover the inherent strengths and values in schools small enough to fit the human dimensions of the child and youth. In the early 1970's, the North Central Association (NCA) Commission on Schools was pressured for recognition of the small school's plight, and formed a Committee on Small Schools to assist these schools to become better quality schools by building on their strengths and attenuating their weaknesses. The committee then undertook the Small Schools Project to: identify the strengths and evident weaknesses which smallness brings in its wake; commission a survey of the literature relative to these strengths and weaknesses; and conduct an inventory of all NCA small schools (schools with 300 or fewer students in grades 9-12) to determine the extent to which certain effective practices used by small schools are in effect in NCA small schools. The three papers discuss the results of the Small Schools Project: "An Overview of the Alleged Strengths and Weaknesses of the Small School"; "An Annotated Survey of the Literature on Small Schools"; and "An Inventory of Effective Practices in Small Schools: A School Locator Service." A copy of the form "An Inventory of Effective Practices in Small Schools" and its cover letter are appended. (NQ)

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The Small School: Returning to the Human Dimension

A Report on the Small Schools Project of the Committee on Small Schools

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

Occasional Paper Number Two

Commission on Schools
North Central Association
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Chicago, Illinois 60615

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A copy of the form *An Inventory of Effective Practices in Small Schools* and the covering letter that accompanied it.

Introduction

The small school is one of the newly rediscovered resources in American education. After long decades of neglect, not to say active and open opposition, educators have begun to discern the inherent strengths and values in schools small enough to fit the human dimensions of the child and youth. As mass man becomes more and more a grim reality in the world at large, it is becoming increasingly evident that the individual in his formative years flourishes best in a vis-a-vis setting, in a school environment where the young person can fully claim his own individuality.

This is not to deny that some genuine problems and disadvantages inhere in small schools. Large schools, up to the point of diminishing returns, can be more cost-effective, if not necessarily more educationally effective. Students can be exposed to a wider diversity of human beings in the larger institutions. Moreover, if competition is to remain the leit motif of our society, there is no question that larger schools afford a more challenging, even ruthless situation.

However, educators are discovering that most of the disadvantages that are alleged to be inherent in small schools can be diminished, circumvented, or even reversed by educational imagination and flexibility. Many of the loudly proclaimed advantages of large schools can be effected in the small school once it has broken through its own slavish emulation of standard procedures and processes. By creating modes and formats uniquely adapted to its own strengths, the small school can equal if not surpass the educational efforts of any of its larger counterparts.

This realization has been slow in reaching most American educators. With our national infatuation with size and growth, it is easy to understand why throughout the last several decades the persistent effort has been to eliminate the small school. District consolidation, though a worthwhile endeavor in itself, has been wrongly interpreted to require schools of gross size. Our educational spokesmen have almost invariably connected bigness with goodness. Even accreditation standards have been designed to make it difficult for the small school to struggle its way to membership in regional associations.

However, in the late sixties, the increasing alienation of our young people from their outsized schools began to thrust home the reality that large schools are not the best setting for many of our youth in their quest toward maturity and the future. Indeed, much of the subsequent growth and acceptance of the alternative school can be attributed to

this negative reaction against gigantism. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that it is the smallness, the face-to-face environ of these alternative schools that has accounted for their unexpected success with many previously disaffected students.

This, then, as background. In the early seventies, it became evident to a growing number of people within the NCA Commission on Schools that too many of our small schools were being driven from NCA membership by the inappropriate application of standards devised specifically to discern quality in larger institutions. F. R. Wanek, NCA State Chairman for South Dakota, ably seconded by M. D. Forrest, a school superintendent in Arkansas, began to press for a recognition by the Commission of the plight of the small school and an understanding that small schools can also be good schools, given the proper educational leadership and vision.

Responding to this pressure, in 1970 the Commission formed a Committee on Small Schools, placing on it the mandate to assist small schools to become quality schools through program and curriculum adaptations. The intent was not to retain the small school per se within the NCA but rather to help the small schools become better schools by building on their strengths and attenuating their weaknesses.

Since then the Committee on Small Schools has been active and productive. It has held several drive-in conferences for administrators of small schools; it has effected certain amendments to the standards that have rendered them more pertinent to the needs and requirements of small schools; it has raised its voice time and again in the advocacy of the small school within the councils of the Commission. More importantly, it has undertaken an ambitious Small Schools Project. The course of the project consisted in first identifying the many strengths and the evident weaknesses that smallness brings in its wake. Then a survey of the literature relative to these alleged strengths and weaknessed was commissioned. Following this, an inventory was taken of all NCA small schools—which the Committee has defined as schools with 300 or fewer students in grades nine through twelve—to determine the extent to which certain effective practices used by small schools to overcome their weaknesses and to capitalize upon their strengths are in effect in NCA small schools.

This present Ocassional Paper reports the results of the project up to this point. It is now our expectation that once his brochure has gained currency in the field, the Committee on Small Schools will be able to ask two or three of our member schools to serve as model small schools. The intent will be to ascertain the extent to which the more exemplary practices can be mounted in one school and the degree to which such an effort will improve the educational process and product. The effort made by the school will have to be implemented without a

great increase in resources if it is to have any reality component. The role of the Commission on Schools will be to provide professional assistance to the school in establishing its program and in laying plans for its evaluation.

Though this total project has matured slowly, the Committee on Small Schools feels that it has much merit. The Committee is delighted at this time to offer this Ocassional Paper to its member small schools. It is its hope that the paper will result in a careful review of the present practices and program in each of our member schools to determine whether some newer practices might not be helpful at this point. If the final result is a robust strengthening of NCA small schools, the project will have fulfilled its salient goals.

THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL SCHOOLS
ROBERT H. KIDD, *Chairman*
JOHN A. STANAVAGE, *Secretary*

November 1974

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Section I

An Overview of the Alleged Strengths and Weaknesses of the Small School

The starting point for the renaissance of the small school must be the determination of its inherent strengths and the identification of its structural weaknesses. Then steps can be taken to build program and procedures on those strengths, while at the same time devising expedients to reduce if not eliminate the weaknesses. Hitherto, the primary problem seems to have been that small schools chose to mirror their larger counterparts rather than to recognize their own unique advantages then structure their educational programs to take full benefit of those strengths.

It should be recognized that many of the strengths of small schools can prove to be deterrents to effective education unless they are capitalized upon creatively. Small class size means little if the teacher persists in lecturing to the class as though standing before an audience of hundreds. Potential flexibility of scheduling for all students has no value if the school continues on a rigid six by five schedule for all students. The exigent need is not only to recognize the values and retardants of smallness but to take steps to modify the program so as to realize the strengths and repress the weaknesses. As is well expressed in the Working Paper for the Small Schools Conference at the University of Northern Iowa:

> An examination of some of the strengths and weaknesses of the small school is the first step in solving the problem. It must be emphasized that it is but the *first step*, as it would be a waste of time to identify these elements and then do nothing about them.[1]

No list of purported strengths and weaknesses of small schools can hope to be complete or beyond cavil. Nevertheless, the Committee on Small Schools has ventured to list the major advantages and disadvantages of smallness in schools. It offers this census with no great assurance that it has exhausted the subject, but it does have sturdy confidence in the fact that the strengths and weaknesses it has delineated are indeed realities in the field.

THE PURPORTED STRENGTHS OF SMALL SCHOOLS

1. Close working relationships subsist between the faculty and the administration. These relationships are frequently more personal than role-expectative.

[1]University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls. *The Small School—How It Can Be Improved.* Working Paper for the Small Schools Conference, March 15-16, 1974, p. 2.

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2. Bureaucratic overload—red tape, intricate regulations—is not so prevalent in small schools as in large.

3. Decisions in the small school can be made more on an individual basis than on a collective basis. This relates both to staff and students.

4. There is a greater sense of community felt by everyone in the school. Smallness by its very nature ordains involvement.

5. Intimate, vis-a-vis relationships are possible between teachers and students in the classrooms and in the more informal settings in the school.

6. There generally are more favorable student/teacher ratios in small schools than larger ones.

7. There is a greater possibility of a small school becoming in fact and in operation learner-centered, with all this means for a positive affective climate and the ultimate burgeoning of the individual.

8. The potentiality for effective individualization of instruction and for broad independent study programs is great.

9. Since numbers alone preclude ability grouping at any one grade level, this averts many of the deleterious effects of that common practice. Moreover, the possibility of grade-crossing and age-crossing in classrooms grows significantly as the size of the school diminishes.

10. A small school presents a student with a greater opportunity to discover his identity, to learn about himself.

11. A small school provides greater opportunity for each student to participate in the total school activity program. Each student is needed in the program; hence the activity program becomes a learning activity, rather than merely a stage for the stellar performances of a few.

12. The inescapable importance of the single individual in all phases of the program is to be noted. Every student is needed; each teacher plays a vital role.

13. Guidance becomes a staff-wide function in reality, rather than a service provided only by specialists. This total staff involvement in guidance, inevitable in a school setting in which everyone is known to everyone else, makes for truly effective guidance at the point of need.

14. Means and measures to insure proper discipline are not so demanding and obtrusive as they are in larger schools. In consequence, more staff effort can be devoted to the teaching process.

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15. Teachers are constrained by the logistics of small schools to be more generalist than specialist, thus providing that breadth of educational and human contacts so desired in our schools and so infrequently achieved.

16. Smallness in a school fosters closer relationships among teachers, resulting in a more unified staff approach to such problems as articulation, program change, the determination of the fundamental purposes of the school, and so forth.

17. Change can be effected with greater ease in a small school, once the desire and the determination have asserted themselves. Designs for innovation do not need to be so complex as those required in the more mammoth schools.

18. The non-grading of a small high school, placing every student on his own individual progress plan, attains an immediate feasibility that is not present in a larger school.

19. Small schools can—indeed frequently must—cross-grade students in classes. This results in a more stimulating age mix than is to be found in the average classroom in larger schools, where the number of peer models is stringently limited. Thus a multiple-age classroom is more than an expedient; it is an educational desideratum.

20. The school schedule can be altered more readily in a small school to permit field trips, school-wide assemblies, work-study programs, and so forth.

21. Close working relationships normally subsist between the small school and its community. Hence the staff of the school can establish an authentic identification with the community, cultivating mutual respect and understanding.

22. Teachers in small schools get to know parents better, thus providing more effective cooperation in the resolution of whatever problems might arise.

23. In small schools, a larger percentage of the parents become involved in school affairs than in larger ones. This parental involvement leads not only to better community support but also enhances the total educational program.

24. The small school, if properly directed, can become the community school, serving the needs of its students and also satisfying the wide panoply of educational demands and desires of the community at large.

The caveat needs to be sounded again that these strengths are merely potentials until a dedicated staff and an enlighted administration combine to turn them into realities. If a small school ignores these strengths in developing its program and processes, then it will languish in its smallness.

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THE PURPORTED PROBLEMS SMALLNESS BRINGS IN ITS WAKE

To resort once more to the Working Paper for the Small Schools Conference at the University of Iowa:

> The size of a school is not necessarily the determining factor for quality. There are good large schools and good small schools. The reverse is also true. The quality of the educational program is usually determined by how well a school capitalizes on its strengths and how well it overcomes its weaknesses . . . The small school also has potential strengths and weaknesses, but the strengths will not be realized and the weaknesses will not be overcome unless programs are planned to analyze the potential strengths and weaknesses and steps are then taken to improve the quality of student experiences in the school.[2]

There clearly are some disadvantages connected with smallness in a school. While these weaknesses can be palliated in some circumstances, and even eliminated, this can be achieved only by a conscious effort on the part of the professional staff. The major disabilities that can afflict small schools seem to be:

1. A quality small school program requires a relatively high per student expenditure. Small schools are not inherently *efficient*—that is they do not educate the largest number of students for the smallest amount of money. However, they may be far more effective than large schools in realizing the human and ultimate purposes of education. It should be noted also that the additional costs required by a good small school program are not exorbitant and that in some cases they can be less than those needed for the gargantuan school.

2. The small school's enrollment makes it difficult to offer a broad and variegated curriculum. But this is only true if orthodox scheduling and programming patterns are followed. The challenge here is to devise new and better ways of bringing broader educational offerings to students in small schools.

3. There is a paucity in the small school of varying and contrasting psychological environments for its students. The student body in a small school normally is more homogeneous in ethnic, socio-economic, and cultural background than would be true of the students in a larger school. The need, then, is to provide experiences in cultural diversity within the school's program, since they cannot be experienced on a day-to-day basis.

4. Limited alternatives are open to a student and teacher when they become embroiled in conflict or antagonism. A student generally cannot be moved to another section of the same course, since many courses are offered on a one-section-only basis.

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[2]Ibid, p. 1.

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5. There is a tendency for small schools to seek to mirror-image larger schools in program, practices, procedures, and outcomes. Frequently this leads to an inappropriate, inferior program.

6. Limited supportive services—health services, psychological services, counseling services—are available to students in small schools.

7. Difficulties frequently are experienced by students transferring into a small school from a larger one because of the narrower band of course offerings in the small school. However, educational ingenuity should make it possible to provide a meaningful, sequential program for every student by devising sound expedients and alternatives.

8. Small schools experience difficulty in providing programs other than those that are strictly academic. The need for vocational/occupational education is a pressing one in most small schools, but limited funds make it impossible to provide suitable programs. However, work-study and cooperative work programs can be mounted in the communities of small schools as well as in the more bustling urban environments, and this offers a sound approach to meaningful vocational education.

9. Small schools sometimes feel they cannot offer work at advanced and specialized levels within the academic program. But again, there are some proved and sound educational measures by which this problem can be overcome.

10. Students with exceptional learning problems frequently are not adequately or appropriately cared for in small schools, since the provision of special education is most expensive when the numbers to be treated are small. But here again the school can resolve this problem by the use of consortia, shared programs, use of community volunteers, and similar efforts.

11. The prevailing emphasis on the values and virtues of size in the American ethos at times makes it difficult to sustain morale in a small school. It is difficult for teachers and students in small schools not to develop some kind of inferiority—perhaps even a defeatist—attitude unless they are unusually perceptive and can read the emerging trends in our turbulent society.

12. While generalist teachers on the staff represent a strength, there is an obverse side to this matter. These teachers have to function in more areas than their peers in larger schools; this sometimes results in inappropriate assignments, with teachers working outside their fields of strength.

13. The circumscription of the variety of strengths to be found on the staff is rather marked in some small schools. Since the number of staff members is small, not all the requisite competencies—academic, psychological, avocational—may be found on the staff.

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14. Resulting from the limited number of sections in any one course or grade level, teachers in small schools in general must be assigned multiple preparations, sometimes as many as four or five different course offerings.

15. Teachers are frequently isolated from their colleagues in their respective fields, making exchange of professional ideas within a field rather difficult. On the other hand, this compels the teacher to dialogue with peers in other areas, thus broadening the general ambit of educational concern within the school as a whole.

16. If the school is geographically isolated, as well as small, there is a clear and present danger of cultural impoverishment. Persistent efforts need to be made by both the school and the community to overcome this nagging deficiency.

17. The small school may have some stubborn difficulties in staff recruitment and maintenance, even in this era of a surplusage of teachers. The multiple preparations, the housing situation in the community, the generally smaller salaries, and similar factors make recruitment a continuing and genuine concern in small schools.

18. The comunity may exert an overbearing influence on the small school, since it is so central to the life of the people as a whole. To some extent the educational leadership of the school administrator may be more directly challenged by the lay public than would be true in a larger school. The community may completely impose its mores on the school program, even when they are inappropriate for young people preparing to live in contemporary America.

    However, when the school transforms itself into a truly community school, some of these intractable problems vanish, since the "we/they" distinction blends into an "our" situation.

These constraints placed upon the small school may seem almost insuperable at first blush, but in reality practically all of them can be moderated and in some cases obviated by creative educational thinking and sound planning on the part of the professional staff. The basic need is to establish the school patterns appropriate to small schools, rather than replicating the processes and procedures of larger schools. In this way not only will the small school prove to be effective—and perhaps even "efficient"—but it also will find and cherish its own identity.

SOME GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS IN IMPROVING SMALL SCHOOLS

While specific program and curriculum practices will be canvassed later in this paper, some general approaches to program improvement in small schools can be considered at this point. Those that seem unusually promising are:

1. The school must seek to build a positive attitude among teachers, pupils, and parents. They must be convinced that the school's small enrollment actually represents a strength rather than a disability. If the constituents of the school can be convinced the school is truly effective, they will continue to work towards its ongoing improvement. Since favorable attitudes towards a school usually come from personal involvement in its self-renewing efforts, students, teachers, and parents should be given full opportunity to participate in a systematic program of school improvement.

2. The small school must capitalize on its small classes and its close relationships in order to further individualize instruction. This will require an intense in-service program for teachers and effective orientation programs for the students and parents. The lecture/recitation mode of instruction predominates in our schools. Not all teachers have mastered the techniques of small group instruction and individualized learning; moreover, these approaches to learning are frequently misunderstood by students and parents.

3. The students must be exposed to that wide range of cultural, ethnic, educational and vocational experiences that so readily are to be found in more urbanized communities. To accomplish this will require planned instructional programs and extensive field trips in an effort to compensate to an appreciable degree for those elements missing in the school's community.

4. The instructional resources of the school's community should be surveyed and maximum use of them made within the school program. Elementary teachers have hobbies that can furnish excitement and enrichment to the secondary program; the secondary teacher commands subject matter expertise that can be called upon to enhance the elementary school learning experiences. Moreover, many people in the community have much to contribute on a voluntary basis to the education of young people, if these community resource people are identified and courted.

5. Because of the present over-adequate teacher supply, the school now can staff itself more proficiently with those competencies and versatilities required of teachers in small schools. This will demand a carefully developed long-range plan in which existing misassignments are corrected and limited, narrow specialists gradually replaced. A systematic program of more effective staff utilization can do much to expand the program.

6. A climate receptive to new and better instructional methods should be cultivated in the school, stimulating the staff to seek ways of adapting and improving the total program. The array of sound instructional methods from which one may choose is rich: single semester courses can be investigated, mini-courses hold real possibilities for broadening the curriculum, supervised

correspondence courses have merit, and the exchange of students/teachers/materials between neighboring schools can do much to vivify the program.

7. Even in the absence of formal consortia, several small schools can organize for mutual assistance and support in such efforts as in-service programs, school evaluation, and pools of instructional materials.

8. Contemporary educational technology can be called upon to improve the program and to provide educational experiences which would otherwise be unavailable in many small schools. Videotape, the telephone amplifier, films, recordings, models and realia, computer assisted instruction, all these represent simply a sample of the newer technological advances that should be explored and utilized where appropriate.

The most damaging limitations of the small school exist not in its smallness but in the constricted imagination and venturesomeness of the staff. Undoubtedly the challenge is great, but it simply parallels the challenge being faced by our society—reduction of the size of man's overtowering institutions to humane scale.

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Section II

*An Annotated Survey of the Literature on Small Schools**

INTRODUCTION

Over the past number of years, there has been a great amount of concentrated study, with an equal amount of literature, devoted to the small school in the United States. Along with this plethora of literature —containing lists of project objectives, mention of long-recognized problems, and discussions of possible solutions to these problems—have come contradictory findings for one who attempts to assess the status of the small school. For example, results of one study may provide a list of numerous strengths in the small school, while these same strengths are viewed in another study as weaknesses that must be overcome.

The purpose of this paper, then, is to expolre via a literature review the strengths and weaknesses of small rural schools in hopes of providing definitive target areas for educators and board members associated with these schools. However, prior to examination of strengths and weaknesses of the small school itself, the composite organizational pattern of the small school system deserves comment. This immediately prompts discussion of school district reorganization, since, for the most part, appraisals have placed the small schools in a position of educational inferiority in relation to their large counterparts. The persistent suggestion has been that they overcome their smallness by combining efforts and consolidating systems.

> Regarding consolidation, Tamblyn (1971) made the following statement:
>
> School district reorganization and school consolidation are among the most significant accomplishments throughout most of rural America, and this trend can be expected to continue until we reach a total of not more than 5,000 local school districts supported by 250 to 500 intermediate school districts. Reorganized school districts and consolidated schools, with the help of fleets of school buses, have made a high school education accessible to many youths who previously were denied a high school education. In general, consolidated schools have more diversified program offerings, a larger quantity of up-to-date instructional materials, laboratories and libraries, as well as better utilization of professional staff.
>
> However extensively positive these changes have been, schools in rural areas have a long way to go. Despite all the reorganizing to date, over 33 percent of them enroll 300 or fewer students;

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*Everett D. Edington and John H. Hagel, "Strengths and Weaknesses of Small Schools." Prepared for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Commission on Schools, July, 1972, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, New Mexico (an unpublished report). The report has been edited for this present publication.

almost 80 percent of them have an enrollment of less than 2,500. More than one-third of the students enrolled attend schools with under 5,000 students. In most cases these are rural children. They attend schools in districts far too small to offer a comprehensive educational program.

The purpose of this paper, however, is not to assess the impact of of school consolidation. Rather, this paper is primarily concerned with identifying the alleged strengths and weaknesses of the small school. The paper also will attempt to identify practices that have been developed to build upon strengths of the small school in an effort to overcome the weaknesses. Finally, the paper will attempt to indicate target problems that administrators of small schools may address in an effort to make the small school increasingly effective without a strong infusion of additional funds.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SMALL SCHOOL

In reviewing the literature to identify the alleged strengths and weaknesses of the small school, several factors merge as significant. First, most evaluations of small schools are based upon comparisons with large schools (Givíden, 1963; Jackson, 1966). The implication, as was stressed by Conant (1959), is that large or medium schools constitute the desired norm. Secondly, there is an interlocking of strengths and weaknesses related to a failure to capitalize on opportunities (Stutz, 1965). Thirdly, the various lists and discussions of strengths and weaknesses contain many duplications (Clements, 1970). It therefore seems pertinent to group the alleged strengths and weaknesses into broader, more general areas.

The alleged strengths may be classified in terms of three areas: organizational concerns, sociocultural considerations, and classroom-management practices. The weaknesses may be grouped under five broad areas: finance and facilities, student characteristics and capabilities, curricular deficiencies, professional staff (including teaching, administration, and counseling), and sociocultural aspects.

STRENGTHS

Organizational Concerns

Organizational strengths of the small school appear to be found in the less formal atmosphere surrounding the system. In comparison to the larger school, the freedom from administrative "pettiness" and red tape forms one of the small school's greatest strengths (Isenberg, 1967; Charles, 1969). The potentiality of flexibility and the close knit, nonsegmented operation (Catskill Area Project in Small School Design, 1959; Oregon State Board of Education, 1970) form other strengths not usually found in the large system. Further, the opportunity for keeping better student-progress records is another attribute of the organizational scheme of the small school system (Stutz, 1965).

Other strengths have been noted in studies such as that of Ford et al. (1967). These strengths relate to the ease of implementation for innovation in curriculum and the autonomous feeling the teachers have which supports the freedom for innovation. The Oregon State Board of Education has been a leader in promoting this type of climate, as is evidenced by the work of the Oregon Small Schools Program (Burcham, 1971).

Personal experience by the author has shown that rural teachers and students have a much closer relationship to the school board than is the case in the urban community. It is not uncommon in the small rural school for individual school board members to take direct interest in specific ongoing projects. While this may be considered a strength, it also may constitute a weakness when board members delve into operational problems which are beyond their expertise.

Sociocultural Considerations

Probably the most noted attribute of the sociocultural aspects of the small school system is the professional's personal identification with the community (Catskill Area Project in Small School Design, 1959; Edington and Musselman, 1969; Charles, 1969). The same authors who noted this reported that the educator in the rural community is often a person who is respected and thus wields more leadership and power than does the educator in a larger community. It should also be noted that the teacher's attitude in the rural community is extremely important in terms of teacher satisfaction.

The aforementioned studies also indicated that in the rural community extremes of wealth are usually not so great as in the urban community; thus, stratification into cliques along class lines has not been a problem in rural areas.

Quite often in the small community, the school building becomes the community's meeting place and the central focus of many of its social activities. Charles (1969) also found that the rural school provides for a good student/teacher and parent/community interaction. Furthermore, Clements (1970) reported that there is much more participation in student activities in the small school than in the large school.

Edington and Musselman (1969), in a summary of a conference conducted by the National Federation for the Improvement of Rural Education (NFIRE), indicated that students in rural communities have a more homogenous background than their urban counterparts, thus there are fewer conflicts. Again, however, this may be considered a weakness since students with diverse backgrounds afford a broader range of perspectives for their classmates.

Ford et al. (1967), in a study for the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory on remote high schools, noted that rural teachers are better known to the parents, and because of this there is a much closer relationship between school and community.

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Classroom-Management Practices

It is interesting to note that the practices prevalent throughout the years in the one-room school are manifesting themselves in the more innovative programs throughout the nation today. The open classroom with its individualized approach was commonplace in the one-room school of rural America, wherein the children, by necessity, were working at their own levels on those learning projects that they could do best. The teacher acted as coordinator, and many times the older or better students helped those who were younger or slower. This practice provided for individualized instruction, plus the opportunity for students to develop the sense of responsibility so necessary in adult life.

Another strength of the small school was noted by Stutz (1965), who reported that the small school gives the teacher a much better opportunity to be close to the students, to know them better, and to give them individual attention.

Discipline in the rural school is not always the problem that it is in the larger school, although the literature surveyed did not reveal whether this was due to the fact that rural schools are smaller or whether this was due to the nature of the rural student himself. Charles (1969) asserted this was due to more self-discipline in rural students.

The Catskill Area Project in Small School Design (1959) and Ford (1961) revealed that the pupil/teacher ratios in rural schools are relatively low compared with non-rural schools. Thus, rural teachers can provide more individualized attention to the students. Small classes, however, have some disadvantages (to be discussed later in this paper) such as their relatively higher cost.

Ford (1961) and Stutz (1965) pointed out that the possibilities of team teaching could be exploited more facilely in the small school and that flexible scheduling could also be implemented more readily. This is not necessarily true, however, unless the administration and teachers are willing to implement such innovations in their schools. Moreover, the Catskill Area Project in Small School Design (1959) found that in small schools there is more pupil participation in policy-making and planning school activities. This is probably because students are much closer to the administration than is the case in many larger urban school districts. Also, both Ford (1961) and Stutz (1965) have indicated that classroom management in the small school is not so complicated as it is in the larger school.

In general, the strengths of small schools derive from the more intimate relationship between teachers and their students. Most of the writers in this field, however, have based their conclusions on general observations rather than on controlled research. There is some danger, therefore, in accepting this assumption too explicitly. Nevertheless, empirical observations suggest this assumption is true. These same careful observations indicate that the small school setting provides a better opportunity for a tight-knit organization, good social contacts by the staff with the students, and better classroom management than does its larger counterpart.

WEAKNESSES

Finance and Facilities

The volume of literature concerning the weaknesses of small schools is much larger than that dealing with the strengths of these schools. This may be because weaknesses seem easier to identify and to measure.

The source of the various weaknesss within the small school system appears to stem from a perennial lack of funds. This is true, for example, of the inadequate facilities so apparent throughout the schools in rural America. Numerous writers—including Stutz (1965) and Edington and Musselman (1969)—have pointed out the problem of inadequate and inferior facilities in rural schools. The acute shortages exist mainly in specializing areas, such as libraries, laboratories, office space, and gymnasiums. Since such facilities frequently must serve various functions in the small school, it is not surprising that they frequently prove inadequate for some of the subpurposes they must serve.

The fact that the tax burden in rural areas frequently is greater on those whose children are no longer in school often leads to taxpayer rebellions in voting on enlarging appropriations for rural schools.

It must be realized that agriculture, the major industry in rural areas, is linked entirely with the individual family farm; thus the individual taxpayer sees taxes coming directly off the top of profits from his business.

Then, too, due to the smaller number of students in rural school systems, the cost per student is higher than in the larger urban or consolidated school systems. A report by the Oregon State Board of Education (1969) pointed out that the per-student cost in small schools may often almost double that of the larger school. This was further substantiated by Clements (1970) and by Mack and Lederman (1969). Unfortunately, the per-student cost usually cannot be reduced unless a larger number of students are enrolled in the small school. A stark exception to this, however, was found in a report by the Massachusetts State Board of Education (1968) which reported per-pupil cost in small high schools approximately $100 less than those in the regional high schools, due to the more extensive curricular offerings in the regional schools.

Buckland (1958) studied rural school improvement projects in Pennsylvania and indicated that logistical problems such as time, numbers, and space are prevalent in the rural schools. However, one of the greatest problems is that of recruiting top-quality teachers. Numerous writers have noted that throughout rural America teacher salaries are generally lower than in urban areas. In addition to the problems of recruitment, it also is difficult to keep well-qualified teachers, counselors, and administrators. They usually move on to better paying posts, while those who are less qualified tend to stay in rural areas (Stutz, 1965; Estes, 1967; Burchinal, 1963; Edington and Musselman, 1969; Texas Educational Agency, 1971).

There are also indications that rural schools are guilty of "under-investment" in guidance. This was suggested by Horner et al, (1967), in a review of occupational and educational decision-making of rural youth, and by Swanson (1970) in his discussion of the organization and administration of vocational education in rural areas. An extremely limited tax base (Stutz, 1965), along with the conservative attitude of the majority of rural people concerning investment in the schools, makes it very difficult for the schools to provide adequate financing for guidance.

Mack and Lederman (1969) in their position paper on small schools in the state of New York, pointed out that the small schools have manifest difficulties in effecting change. This is due partly to the fact that hiring adequate staff with a broad range of abilities is not easy for small schools. Also, with financial stringencies and poor facilities, it is very difficult for the small school to change at a rapid tempo. There are, however, some heartening cases scattered throughout the nation which show that these disadvantages can be overcome. (Examples, among others, would be Meeker, Colorado, and Wewahitchka, Florida.)

Student Characteristics and Capabilities

Horner et al. (1967) did an extensive review of factors related to rural youth in Nebraska and reported the following: (1) fewer capable rural males attend college than urban males; (2) economic considerations generally do not appear to be major influencing factors here, rather the occupation of the father, attitudes of parents towards education, and the education of parents; (3) aspiration for farming is transmitted from father to son more often than aspiration for other occupations; and (4) on-the-job experience is an important factor influencing the correct decision-making of the youth.

There are strong indications that rural youth are disadvantaged in terms of occupational and educational aspirations. According to Sperry et al. (1965), student goals are primarily influenced by the family, especially by level-of-living status. Thus, since level-of-living status and goals of the family in rural areas are often lower than in urban or suburban areas, many rural youth have lower aspirations than urban youth. But, writing on the subject of aspirations, Densely (1967) found that rural students often had higher occupational aspirations, compared with their ability, than did urban students.

Haller (1963) found that occupational aspirations of boys who plan to go back to the farm are much lower than for boys who do not plan to return to the farm. This creates a dilemma, since with the increasing size of farms and the fewer number of farmers required, a great many boys who plan to be farmers just will not find the opportunity.

Ohlendorf and Kuvlesky (1967) found that white youth generally have lower educational aspirations and expectations than Negro youth, perhaps because the blacks realize that higher educational levels are essential to attaining the high-level occupations to which they aspire. In addition, Kuvlesky and Ohlendorf (1968) found that urban youth

aspired to high-prestige professional positions at a rate three times greater than rural youth.

These are clear indications that rural schools require improved systems of guidance and counseling. Aller (1967) noted that in small, rural districts there is great need for an improved system of information about employment opportunities, job placement, and related areas.

Curricular Deficiencies

One glaring weakness in many small schools is the narrow curriculum. With limited numbers of students and teachers, it is difficult to have a broad-based curriculum that gives students opportunity for choice. In many small high schools throughout the nation, the number of electives is extremely limited. In a summary of the National Working Conference on Solving Educational Problems in Sparsely Populated Areas, Edington and Musselman (1969) made the following observations concerning curriculum in rural schools: (1) limited offerings in curriculum tend to produce a kind of educational prevention; (2) there are extremely limited extracurricular programs; (3) relevance of courses of study to future requirements is questionable, especially with respect to those students entering post-secondary vocational programs; (4) there is a tendency of small schools to copy the practice of large schools, thus failing to capitalize on the advantages of small schools in developing curriculum; (5) limited resource personnel are available in the community; (6) a much smaller percentage of rural schools have kindergartens and preschool programs; and (7) program inadequacies are particularly acute in terms of occupational education and guidance.

Swanson (1970) reported that rural school administrators are under pressure to maintain college-prep programs for the college-bound student and frequently quite forget the non-college-bound student. This is educational waste, especially in those rural areas where few students actually go on to college. It should also be noted that most administrators and teachers in rural areas have little background or knowledge of vocational education. Furthermore, most rural communities do not have the industry to support external vocational education programs.

Mercure (1967), in his speech before the National Outlook Conference on Rural Youth, emphasized the limited program for minority students offered in most small schools. There is a marked lack of Chicano and Black studies. Buckland (1958) stated this cultural impoverishment was not only true for minority students, but for all rural students. The failure of rural schools to stimulate cultural and recreational programs is due to a number of reasons. One is lack of finances; another is that the children must ride buses long distances to school and have no transportation back to school once they are home; furthermore, there is a lack of enthusiasm in many rural communities for these types of cultural programs. Also, it has been pointed out that there are very limited instructional materials in these schools for focusing on broad cultural concerns. (Burchinal, 1963).

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Finally, a limited choice of offerings (Oregon State Board of Education, 1969) is found in most small schools. This is especially true of advanced courses in the areas of math and science. Offering more than one foreign language is almost unheard of in many small schools.

Professional Staff

One of the major weaknesses in the small school has been the inability to obtain and keep high-quality staff. This may be alleviated somewhat, however, by the current over-supply of teachers. Often in the past, only those teachers who could not get jobs in urban or suburban areas went to rural areas to teach.

In the report by the Oregon State Board of Education (1969), the following inadequacies were listed in terms of qualifications of teachers in rural schools: (1) a disproportionate share of below-standard teachers—including fewer permanent teachers, the lowest rank in terms of regular credentials, a higher incidence of young inexperienced teachers and the lowest incidence of advanced degrees; and (2) inadequacies of training—including poor training in curricular and guidance principles and recreational activities, inability to recognize health problems, and lack of specific training to cope with the problems of the rural and small school. This situation is not unique to Oregon. Estes (1967) mentioned that the same situation applies at the national level, and Buckland (1958) described similar difficulties in staffing small schools in Kentucky.

Rural teachers frequently lack time and know-how to do the things that are required in rural areas (Burchinal, 1963). The report by the Oregon State Board of Education (1969) cited similar problems wherein teachers had inadequate time for professional duties because of the large number of extra-class tasks, such as supervising study halls. Furthermore, the Oregon report noted that teaching roles of rural teachers are often multiplied because of the many different preparations required. It is quite common for rural secondary teachers to have as many as five or six different classes daily with the accompanying preparations. Rarely in a small school can a teacher use the same lesson plan with more than one class.

Edington and Musselman (1969) reported that a great many teachers in the small schools of rural America are teaching outside their area for training. It is quite common for a teacher to teach as many as three or four different areas though having adequate training in only one or two. A secondary school with a total of eight or ten teachers may find it impossible to have adequately trained people in all the courses offered. Although consultants might be viewed as a possible solution here, the budget of the small school usually precludes engaging specialists to keep teacher training up-to-date. Often, the school that needs consulting help the most gets the least.

A further problem is that counselors and administrators in small schools, similar to teachers, frequently desire to move to larger, more urban districts. Often, principals and superintendents see the small rural school only as a stepping stone to a position in a large district.

Sociocultural Aspects

The following testimony, provided by Everett D. Edington, Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, is taken from *Hearings Before the Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity of the United States Senate, Ninety-Second Congress, First Session on Equal Educational Opportunity: Part 15—Education in Rural America* (1971):

> A number of writers (have) pointed out that rurality by its very nature may have caused pupils to be disadvantaged. Ackerson (1967) stated at the (N)ational (O)utlook (C)onference on (R)ural (Y)outh that the incidence of incentive to remain in high school or in college was evidently not as great in rural America, as shown by the high dropout rate, and in all too many cases, the educational and vocational opportunities offered to rural young people were quite limited.
>
> Lamanna and Samora (1965) obtained similar findings in a study of Mexican Americans in Texas. They stated that urban residents were almost always better educated than rural residents regardless of sex, age, nativity, or parentage.
>
> It is difficult to make broad generalizations other than those previously mentioned, concerning disadvantaged rural students. Such groups as the mountain folk of the Appalachian region, the southern rural Negroes, the American Indians, or the Spanish-speaking youth of the Southwest have special problems.
>
> The final 1970 census statistics (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1971) show that the total rural population is still in excess of 53 million, of which over 22 million reside in 16 Southern states and 16 million reside in 12 North Central states. Over nine million reside in nine Northeastern states and almost six million in 13 Western states.
>
> The problems experienced by the rural disadvantaged student are not limited to geographical location. Edward T. Breathitt (1967), former Governor of Kentucky, emphasized this fact in his statement that the conditions of the rural disadvantaged were not confined to any one section of the United States. They exist in Appalachia and Alaska, in the Misaissippi Delta and the Midwest, in New England and California. Such conditions are widespread enough to be a national problem.

Many of the problems of rural students seem to relate to family characteristics. For example, Estes (1967) stated that low educational levels of parents seem to be perpetuated in the children. Both Estes and Horner et al. (1967) noted other family characteristics, such as lack of parental interest in classwork and lack of reading materials in the home, as contributing to unfavorable educational attitudes. Along with this, rural parents generally have less formal education than their urban and suburban counterparts.

Another factor, pointed out by Buckland (1958), is the severe lack of privacy in personal life for many rural students who may have no place of their own in the home to keep books and other belongings.

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In addition to the sociocultural patterns within the family, there are sociocultural characteristics of the rural community. It is generally accepted that rural schools are more traditional and resistant to change than are some of their urban counterparts. Also, Estes (1967) pointed out that widespread poverty in rural areas has hampered education and has had a negative effect on the educational motivation of the people there. Then, too, it was noted by Swanson (1970) that, within the rural areas, there is a social ceiling that makes it impossible for most of the people to orbit out of their social groups. The majority of those who do this leave the rural community.

PRACTICES AND PROGRAMS TO CAPITALIZE ON STRENGTHS AND OVERCOME WEAKNESSES

Though a number of the innovative practices and programs used in small schools to improve the quality of education seem to be replications of the experimental programs found in large schools, still many of these have been made indigenous to the small school itself. Unfortunately, evaluation of these experimental practices mainly has been quite subjective. Also, most of the studies concerning innovation in small schools have centered on pilot projects. What is needed is for small schools to consider critically all of those innovations and then to effect those that are most likely to succeed in their own particular settings.

A report from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (1970) describes 15 promising rural-area practices selected for inclusion in a publication on the basis of two questions: (1) Was there evidence that the practice had potential for improving the climate for learning? and (2) Could the practice be adpoted by other small schools within the financial resources available to them? Programs and practices described in the report are the Arctic Nursing Program, Career Research Program, Contractual Study, Eye Opening Experience, Field Experience Program, Guitar and Folk Music Program, Individualized Instruction in Business Education, Learning Packages in English, Nongraded Language Arts Program, Office Training Laboratory, Operation Help, Sea and Fisheries Training, Seventh Period Activity Program, Tutorial Program, and Using Community Resources.

A similar report by the Northwest Lab (McCarl, 1971) contains 28 project descriptions. Also, a publication of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (Wilson, 1970) discusses a number of educational innovations in rural America. Further, Wilson (1970) describes the following programs designed for the improvement of rural education: The Rural School Improvement Project, Rocky Mountain Area Project for Small High Schools, Western States Small Schools Project, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Catskill Area Project in Small School Design, Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Oregon Small Schools Improvement Project, Alaska Rural Schools Project, Upper Midwest Small Schools Project, and Rural Education Improvement Project of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

In broad terms, the various programs and practices that may aid the small school fall under the following general categories: improvement of teacher quality and performance, provision of supporting or shared services, curricular expansion and improvement of classroom organization, and development of community leadership.

Improvement of Teacher Quality and Performance

Possibly the most rewarding of all types of practices and techniques for improvement of the small school are those concerned with the upgrading of teacher quality and performance. Teacher quality may be linked to two factors beyond the immediate control of the school administrator: (1) program deficiencies in the institutions involved in preparation of teachers and (2) shortcomings in the local socioeconomic environment which preclude the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers. While the first of these problems may be solved by bringing pressure to bear upon the teacher-training institutions, the second may require considerable effort (including financial) to permit small schools to compete for quality teachers. This may tend to take care of itself, however, if the present adequate supply of teachers continues.

The most immediate returns can be gained from inservice programs for existing teachers and administrators. In a great many cases, the first change that must take place is the acceptance by the local school leadership of the need for inservice training. In inservice training, small amounts of resources, if managed wisely, can be quite effective. The inservice education may be carried out at the county level or even a larger jurisdiction, since a number of teachers and administrators may share the educators or materials providing the inservice training. Still, some financial assistance from state or Federal levels may be necessary to aid the rural school districts in implementing effective inservice programs.

A good example of an inservice program for improving instructional performance of teachers in rural schools was conducted in 1969 by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Cadwell, 1969). The purpose of the program was to determine the effects of microteaching on the instructional behavior of rural school teachers. As a result of teachers having had the opportunity to observe and analyze their own videotaped teaching behavior, there were significant indications of improvement in instructional skill, teacher attitude, and teacher/pupil interaction.

Provision of Shared Services

A major breakthrough in the broadening and more efficient use of educational resources in rural areas is the "shared-service concept," wherein services that smaller districts are unable to afford are provided over a larger area, encompassing several districts. This requires each district to assume only a portion of the cost.

Types of shared services vary widely and may include guidance services; special instructional programs; computer services; school health services; and services of consultants, coordinators, and supervisors. Growing steadily in this area are programs to be transported physically from one school to another. For example, audiovisual services have been supplied to many schools on a cooperative basis.

Another type of program being shared is inservice training for teachers, wherein an intermediate unit, a county, a service center, or another type of unit may provide inservice programs for all teachers in a broad geographic area. Many states, such as Texas, Nebraska, South Carolina, Michigan, and New York, have passed legislation creating larger service units. The units are organized in different ways in the various states and may or may not have taxing power. In some places, the policy-making boards are composed of lay people, while in other areas the boards are composed of representatives of the school districts involved.

A valuable resource these units have been able to provide is that of information. Many of the units serve as resource centers, having ERIC files as well as other types of materials available for use by students and teachers.

Another practice within the realm of shared services is that of sharing students. For example, students may travel from one district to another in order to avail themselves of various programs. This is reciprocal, in that one small district may offer one special program, a second district may offer another, with students switching districts to attend those schools offering program sessions to meet their specific needs.

The most extensive developmental program related to rural shared services was conducted by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (Jongeward and Heesacker, 1969). A kit was developed containing shared service activities to improve rural education. This kit is available through ERIC as ED 036 666. Document 13-A identifies 215 shared services in 50 states and provides an index of each service by subject area and by state. Document 13-B is a series of 10 information sheets on selected shared services containing interesting facts about the service and identfying sites of exemplary services. Document 13-C lists related documents available through ERIC.

Curricular Expansion and Improvement of Classroom Organization

For the small school to provide ungraded classrooms with individualized instruction, intensive inservice programs are necessary to enable the teachers to implement these new classroom procedures. Further, it is extremely important that proper materials be provided for these teachers, since it is often extremely difficult for them to develop materials for themselves. If proper advantage is taken of materials already developed, the transition to an individualized program may be

effected more readily. Individualized instruction, of course, can give breadth to the narrow curriculum found in the majority of small schools.

Another procedure of considerable promise for small schools is that of cooperative education. Although there are very limited work sites for students in most small towns, far better utilization could be made of those situations. Then, too, summer programs can be implemented, wherein students work at industrial sites or military installations in nearby communities. This has been effective in Cochise County, Arizona, where students are transported to Fort Huachuca to receive on-the-job cooperative training during the summer. Furthermore, the Cochise County program provides instruction during the busride while the students are being transported to their work stations.

It is extremely important that adequate vocational education programs be provided for the rural student since it is he who migrates to the city and proves to be the most unemployable. Although at this time it is relatively impossible to provide the rural student with specific skill training, it is possible to provide exploratory types of programs and a basic core curriculum in certain occupational areas. Then, after the student leaves the secondary school, he will be prepared to go to an urban area and obtain more specialized training or on-the-job experience.

A few divisions of vocational education in state departments of education have recognized the hard dilemma of providing adequate vocational programs in rural schools. One of the leaders is Utah, which has developed specific curricular materials for the small high school (Wasden, 1970). Also, a recent set of guidelines for establishing cooperative work-study programs in small schools is found in *Cooperative Vocational Education in Small Schools: A Suggested Guide for Program Planning*, published by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (1972), in conjunction with the University of Nebraska.

Another area that is not utilized as extensively in small schools as in their larger counterparts is the use of paraprofessionals and instructional aides. Such assistance releases the teacher from many mundane duties, allowing for more constructive use of teacher time. Two rural schools that have successfully used teacher aides are Hagerman High School in Idaho and Rocky Boy Indian School in Montana (Wilson, 1970).

EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

Use of Technology

Modern educational technology, such as educational television, provides a real possibility for improving instruction in rural schools. Although educational television programs are usually not geared specifically for the rural school, much can be and is being done in this area.

In the future, there could be extended usage of television satellites that have been placed in our outer atmosphere. Each state or group of states could develop specific programs for remote rural schools.

Videotape materials, too, should be used much more extensively in rural schools. The amplified telephone is also gaining currency, since it is an inexpensive way to bring to the class a speaker or expert. The speaker lectures, and all classes can hear and question him. A pilot program linking several Colorado schools used the conference-call method to transmit instruction in American history. The instructor was located in his office at Gunnison, while students remained in their classrooms in small schools located as far away as 265 miles.

Computer-assisted instruction is another possibility for the improvement of the small school program. In the past, many of these programs have been implemented in large urban or suburban schools. However, such programs could be readily utilized in rural schools as well. A central computer could serve hundreds of small schools efficiently and at fairly low cost per student.

Experiences Beyond the Classroom

All learning activities necessarily do not have to be carried out on the school campus. For years, Australia has used radio and extensive correspondence courses in working with students in extremely isolated areas. Likewise in rural America, correspondence courses could be sent from a central area to the small isolated school where under the direction of an aide or teacher the courses could be given to a small group of students. Correspondence-like courses could also be conducted via radio or television.

More interschool visitations were suggested in a report by the Oregon State Board of Education (1969). These visitations could broaden the opportunities for the individual rural student. Along these same lines, Ford (1961), in his book *Rural Renaissance: Revitalizing Small High Schools*, mentioned the possibility of out-of-school seminars, wherein small groups of students are brought together for a short period of time for intensive training.

The Appalachia Educational Laboratory recently conducted a child-centered, home-oriented program delivered by means of television broadcasts, home visitations, mobile classrooms, and other media. The program involved building a curriculum based on behavioral objectives for 3-, 4-, and 5-year olds living in rural Appalachia. Final results are not yet available, although a program description and preliminary results are contained in a report by the Appalachia Educational Laboratory (1970).

Development of Community Leadership

Numerous agencies in addition to the schools carry out educational programs in rural communities. The rural school should coordinate efforts with agencies such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps, VISTA,

the Agricultural Extension Service, and the Job Corps. Pinnock (1967) stressed the fact that there are hundreds of educational opportunities provided by various community action programs. The U.S. Office of Education *Report of the Task Force on Rural Education* (1969) indicated that much more attention should be given to adult education programs and that these in turn would help enhance the effectiveness of the regular school program.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS OF SMALL SCHOOLS

A major factor limiting effective education in the country today is the lack of resources available to the schools. Since money for financing schools is not unlimited, every effort must be made to expend existing funds in the most efficient manner. Further, a renewed effort must be made to secure additional funds for schools in rural America. First, however, the specific educational needs unique to rural America must be identified, probably at the state or national level. Coupled with this, not only the educators but also the local lay leaders of rural America must be stimulated to change and upgrade the educational programs in their schools. Unfortunately, at present many people in rural America are content with the status quo and are apprehensive that change could destroy what they consider to be good.

Other considerations targeted toward the small school include: (1) capitalizing on what is known concerning individualized instruction and having individualized materials available in the schools; (2) providing inservice training for rural school teachers, administrators, and supporting staff to make them aware of the types of materials that are available for student use (this should also help to upgrade methods and techniques, as well as to prepare rural educators for the use of these materials); (3) familiarizing rural educators with existing service centers in their areas so that the possibilities of developing cooperative programs and shared services are explored; and (4) implementing intensive statewide or nationwide recruitment programs to encourage young people to seek out and to remain in the small schools of the land.

Many suggestions made in this paper do not call for substantial amounts of money, although if rural districts are to develop effective educational programs some additional funds will be needed. Intensive study must be made in each school situation to determine how available resources can be used more wisely, more prudently. Some existing programs might need to be eliminated in order to utilize those resources most effective in bringing about positive educational change in the small schools of America.

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Section III

An Inventory of Effective Practices in Small Schools: A School Locator Service

Having identified a relatively substantial number of program and curriculum modifications of especial promise for small schools, the NCA Committee in Small Schools then sought to make an inventory of those practices to be found in NCA schools as of December 1973. The purpose of the survey was not to compile research data but to provide a school locator service.

An inventory form was developed and sufficient copies were sent to each State Chairman for mailing to those schools in his state reporting (for the 1973-74 school year) an enrollment of 300 or fewer students in grades nine through twelve. A copy of the inventory form and the covering letter are to be found in the appendix of this booklet.

The principal of the small school was requested to indicate which of the practices were in current operation in his school to such a successful extent he would encourage inquiries from his colleagues on those particular adaptations. The principal also was requested to note those practices for which written materials were available and those practices that had been attempted but subsequently dropped by the school. In addition, the principal was urged to volunteer any practice not listed on the inventory but holding promise for effectiveness in the small school.

The results of that inventory are summarized in this chapter. While the data are presented in general form, the names and addresses of the schools reporting the various practices are on file in the Commission office. Hence anyone wishing to identify particular schools in which a specific program or practice was reported to be working successfully should write to the office of the Commission on Schools.

THE RETURNS

From the estimated 697 NCA secondary schools having enrollments of 300 or fewer students in grades nine through twelve, some 387 usable returns reached the Chicago office. In addition, sixteen inventories were returned unmarked. This represents a moderate return of 55.5 percent. It is impossible to determine how many of the non-reporting schools were utilizing none of the practices and how many simply failed to return the inventory form. Nevertheless, it probably can be assumed that a relatively large number of NCA small schools are making little or no modification of program, procedures, and practices that would enable them to capitalize on their smallness.

As Table I demonstrates, in the 1973-74 school year small schools represented about eighteen percent of the NCA membership accredited under the Blue Book (standards for secondary schools) and the

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Yellow Book (standards for independent college-preparatory schools). In reporting these data from the small schools inventory, no effort has been made to distinguish between the two types of schools, since only twenty-three schools were accredited under the Yellow Book that year.

It is interesting to note that though the actual percentage is relatively small, Illinois has the largest number of schools in this small-schools category. A goodly number of these Illinois schools fall into the non-public sector or are the secondary schools of compact and adjacent districts. This is not true for Kansas, Nebraska, the two Dakotas, and the overseas dependents' schools—the states having the largest percentage of small schools. In many cases the schools in this second group are not only small but also geographically isolated. Hence even the facile (though sometimes counterproductive) solution of district consolidation is not available to them. These schools must depend mainly on educational imagination and ingenuity to provide quality education.

In considering these reported data, one caution must be observed: these member small schools represent a much smaller portion of the total of small schools in the NCA region than would the larger schools in their particular size category. Of the total of secondary schools within the NCA's nineteen states, about 49 percent are NCA members. These are, of course, the larger schools. A significant number of schools that are not NCA schools are small schools that would have difficulty in meeting the requisite accreditation standards. Because of this disproportion, therefore, the small schools within the NCA probably represent a more elitist group than would larger schools. Hence it would be unwise to attempt to extrapolate the results of this inventory to all small schools within the NCA region. It is highly likely that NCA small schools are not truly representative but comprise a more select group.

Table 1 reports numbers of responses by state. However, the remaining data in subsequent tables have been summarized as a whole, since a more detailed state-by-state analysis did not seem justified.

PRACTICES IN OPERATION

The purposes of this inventory was essentially to provide a school locator service to help interested educators identify small schools in which specific practices were to be found. Since no attempt was made to define each practice and since the data are self-reported, the returns are not truly amenable to research procedures. Hence no analysis in depth has been made, nor can it be made, using these data. Nevertheless, a surface consideration of the data might be valuable.

Table 2 reports on those practices designed to adapt the organization or structure of the small school to its smallness. The sharing of specialist personnel is the most common practice reported here. Considerable sharing of other resources was reported, either through consortia or other methods. In addition, alternation of courses, schedule

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modifications, and multiple grade levels in one class are to be found in many NCA small schools, Though 83 schools did report joint inservice programs, this figure is not impressively high.

Most disappointing was the small number of schools reporting nongraded programs and the granting of credit on other than the Carnegie unit basis—such as proficiency examinations. These are two intra-school adaptations that seemingly would help a small school enhance its educational program, but they appear to have little currency in the field.

TABLE 1

NCA SMALL SCHOOLS AND INVENTORIES RETURNED

	Number of NCA Secondary Schools in State[1]	*Approximate Number of NCA Small Schools*	*Percentage of Member Small Schools*	*Inventories Returned*[2]	*Percentage of Returns*
Arizona	98	15	15.3%	4	26.6%
Arkansas	141	40	28.1	15	37.5
Colorado	130	33	23.1	15+1	48.3
Illinois	575	114	19.8	66+4	61.4
Indiana	254	15	5.9	14	93.3
Iowa	189	51	27.0	31+1	62.7
Kansas	187	80	42.8	47+1	60.0
Michigan	341	10	2.9	8	80.0
Minnesota	144	9	6.2	5	55.5
Missouri	179	19	10.6	5+1	31.6
Nebraska	142	76	53.5	43+1	57.9
New Mexico	61	15	24.6	0	0
North Dakota	44	18	40.9	8	44.4
Ohio	529	26	4.9	15	57.7
Oklahoma	164	51	31.1	25+3	54.9
South Dakota	71	36	50.7	24+2	72.2
West Virginia	135	28	20.7	17	60.7
Wisconsin	265	20	7.5	14	70.0
Wyoming	34	11	32.3	6	54.5
Dependents' Schools	61	30	49.2	25+2	90.0
Totals	3744	697	18.6%	387+16	57.8%

[1]This total includes schools accredited under the *Policies and Standards for Secondary Schools* and under the *Policies and Standards for Independent College-Preparatory Schools* for the 1972-73 school year. It does not include schools accredited under the *Policies and Standards for Junior High/Middle Schools* or the *Policies and Standards for Vocational/Occupational Schools.*

[2]The figure following the plus sign represents a blank inventory returned by a school. (Evidently the inventory forms were not distributed in the state of New Mexico.)

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TABLE 2

ADAPTATIONS OF ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Practice (For the full statement, please refer to the inventory form included in the appendix.)	*In Current Operation*	*Written Materials Available*	*Practice Dropped*
1. Consortium of several schools to share resources	165	11	5
2. Pairing with neighboring small school	69	5	12
3. Fully integrated K-12 program	97	7	3
4. Multiple grade levels in classes	139	8	2
5. Completely non-graded program	5	5	8
6. Alternation of classes on annual basis	149	8	13
7. Alternation of classes on semester basis	137	10	8
8. Shared time with a neighboring school	37	1	5
9. Cross-graded classrooms	31	4	3
10. Four-day week; fifth day for professional or student activities	14	3	7
11. Differentiated staffing	16	4	7
12. Use of vocational/occupational area school	66	10	8
13. Summer school for subjects not taught during the regular year	44	4	14
14. Substantial modification of schedule	115	10	2
15. Cooperative purchasing	74	8	6
16. Shared specialist personnel	216	6	3
17. Shared library resources	86	4	3
18. Shared subject area supervisors	25	1	6
19. Joint inservice programs	83	4	6
20. Shared guidance and counseling services	39	3	5
21. Shared teaching personnel	47	1	8
22. Credits based on other than Carnegie unit	27	6	5
23. Sharing resources with non-educational agency	26	3	5
24. Other (Please see text for listing of practices volunteered by respondents.)	5	0	1

The only additional practice suggested by the respondents for this particular section was the sharing of courses with the local elementary school for music and for physical education, thus making greater program resources available to both schools.

Adaptations in curriculum and program designed to help a small school function more effectively are reported in Table 3. Independent study and work-study programs, both of which are rapidly becoming

fixed features in American secondary education, are the two practices reported by the largest number of respondents. Indeed, it would seem that small schools resort to independent study to a greater extent than their larger counterparts, if these somewhat tenuous figures are valid. Mini courses, which are particularly helpful in the small school situation, were reported with considerable frequency.

Programmed learning, which was promoted so grandiloquently fifteen years ago, and which, were it able to deliver its promises, would be so finely adaptable to small schools, obviously has not met with a hospitable reception in the field. The data here would suggest that learning packages are outstripping programmed materials in our small schools, as is true in the larger schools as well.

Several other program practices of especial merit were suggested by the respondents. Most of these were concerned with adjustments of the schedule to permit an enrichment of the curriculum offerings. Early-bird classes, intensive study courses (one or two weeks in length), inter-semester courses, semester electives, and the trimester plan were mentioned as being effective ways of overcoming the potential poverty of a small school's curriculum. Special seminars also appear to be a good way to import greater breadth into the program. And the use of resource centers, coupled with individualized programs, was reported by a few schools.

Instructional modifications are summarized in Table 4. It is interesting to note that fewer adaptations were reported in this area than in the more generalized areas of organization and program. Apparently, instruction remains fairly conventional in the small schools, either because the impetus for change has not been felt at the classroom level or because instructional practices do not necessarily have to be different in a small school.

Instructional television as yet has had an insignificant impact on NCA small schools. Perhaps the new ETV satellite over the Rocky Mountains will alter this to some degree, but certainly up to this point television has not proved the boon to the small isolated school that it once was hailed to be. Nor have the other newer technological developments—video tapes, amplified telephone instruction, and educational films—made any appreciable headway in these schools.

Supervised correspondence courses are one of the major measures by which these small schools have attempted to broaden their programs. This is a practice that should thrive even more vigorously in the future, as more concern is paid to making correspondence courses more vivid and meaningful to young people. The reported low rate of team teaching is not surprising, since these schools frequently are too small to have more than one teacher working in a discipline. But the sparsity of individual progress programs is disappointing, since one would suppose that this procedure would be of appreciable value to a small school.

TABLE 3

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM ADAPTATIONS

*Practice**	*In Current Operation*	*Written Materials Available*	*Practice Dropped*
1. Mini-courses	106	24	12
2. Quarter electives	90	14	6
3. Independent study	175	17	8
4. Multiple levels of accomplishment	96	5	4
5. Learning packages	73	13	8
6. Work-study programs	185	19	5
7. Integrated courses	94	5	3
8. Programmed learning	41	4	5
9. Combined subjects	20	3	8
10. Others (Practices volunteered by respondents; please see text for listing.)	14	5	0

*For the full statement, please refer to the inventory form included in the appendix.

TABLE 4

ADAPTATIONS IN INSTRUCTION

*Practice**	*In Current Operation*	*Written Materials Available*	*Practice Dropped*
1. Courses via ITV or ETV	30	4	7
2. Supervised correspondence courses	88	1	11
3. Action education	49	5	7
4. Students tutoring for credit	69	5	8
5. Video and audio-tape courses	27	5	6
6. IPI or other form of individual progress	26	4	4
7. Courses taken on college campus	56	5	7
8. Courses on film	12	5	3
9. Individual study	43	6	6
10. Peer teaching	27	5	7
11. Team teaching	55	4	8
12. Amplified-telephone instruction	13	2	9
13. Others (Practices volunteered by respondents; please see text for listing.)	13	2	9

*For the full statement, please refer to the inventory form included in the appendix.

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TABLE 5

A MISCELLANY OF PRACTICES

Practice*	In Current Operation	Written Materials Available	Practice Dropped
1. Extended field trips, for credit	19	3	6
2. Wide use of paraprofessionals	25	3	6
3. Itinerant teachers	10	2	6
4. Mobile science labs	6	3	5
5. Mobile vocational education facilities	9	1	9
6. Mobile industrial arts labs	3	0	10
7. Mobile special classrooms	10	1	8
8. Special inservice workshops for teachers	109	4	3
9. Special inservice programs for principals	39	2	2
10. Town-meeting student government	18	4	7
11. Visiting consultant for extended period	21	4	4
12. The lighted schoolhouse/community school	31	2	2
13. Aggressive recruitment of teachers	44	3	2
14. Extensive home visits	27	4	3
15. Student exchange programs	41	6	8
16. Shared materials with other schools	52	2	3
17. School/community library	18	6	3
18. Effective practices to promote student participation in activities	87	1	4
19. Others (Practices volunteered by respondents; please see text for listing)	18	3	0

*For the full statement, please refer to the inventory form included in the appendix.

One school reported its efforts to develop a completely programmed curriculum based on behavioral objectives. A pass/fail marking system was reported by one school, while another utilized a no-grade approach, giving credit for completion of the course work. This, of course, is a major step towards the full individualization of the program.

The responses to the last section of the questionnaire—the catch-all of miscellaneous practices—are reported in Table 5. Few of these practices are to be found to any great degree in the responding schools. However, it is encouraging that a significant number of reporting schools offer special inservice workships for staff members to help them adjust to the unique requirements of small schools. In this way, recog-

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nition is being given to the distinctive nature of a small school and the particular challenges teachers must face in working in such schools. Unfortunately, this fine inservice effort apparently is not matched by an aggressive recruitment drive for teachers to serve in small schools.

It would seem that the community concept—the lighted schoolhouse—would be a natural response of most small schools to their communities. But this has not proved to be the fact in the field—probably because of the great geographical distances involved in many small school situations. Only thirty-one of the responding schools reported that they are functioning as community schools—a minuscule number.

Drawing upon the vis-a-vis nature of the small school, two of the respondents noted that they have faculty/student boards, one in lieu of the conventional student council and the other in certain subject areas. Also building on the close relationships found in the small school, direct faculty involvement in the counseling program was reported by two or three schools. One school reported a multi-school materials center upon which it can draw freely.

Perhaps the most exciting procedure was volunteered by one of the overseas dependents' schools. It was undertaking a curriculum review study designed to ascertain the best possible program for that small school. Students, teachers, and parents were involved in the process. It is this kind of approach, rather than a pre-fabricated model imposed by outside forces, that augurs well for the future of any small school.

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

While responses were received from somewhat less than sixty percent of the NCA small schools, thus undoubtedly intruding some skew into the results, these data probably are fairly representative of the conditions existing within our member small schools. And though the data were not collated for general research purposes, they do seem to justify a few broad conclusions:

1. Considerable ferment is afoot in our small schools as they seek more effective ways of providing quality education within the context of their smallness. This is evidenced by the large number of various practices reported, as well as by the fact that nearly every practice has been tried and sometimes dropped by one school or another. Clearly there is much questing in the field for more effective ways of providing education in the small school.

2. Because of the uniqueness of each small school setting, no single practice predominates in these schools. Only one—work-study programs—approaches the fifty percent point as far as the responding schools were concerned. This represents no weakness on the part of the small school, be it noted, but rather points out the distinctive nature of the individual school, demanding adjustments and adaptations consonant with the local situation.

3. Few, if any, of these reporting schools have attempted a substantive, holistic modification of their structure, organization, curriculum, program, and procedures designed to capitalize fully upon the strengths and to moderate the weaknesses of smallness. Such an effort could be singularly productive for any small school making this endeavor; moreover, such a school well could serve as a paradigm for its sister small schools. This, of course, is precisely the intent of the next and final stage of the NCA Project for Model Small Schools.

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Postscript

Having completed the first three phases of its proposed project, the NCA Committee on Small Schools is more assured than ever that the small school not only has a variable future, but that with thoughtful design and planning it well can become the keystone for the new configuration of schools emerging in contemporary America. Smallness, rather than being a hapless condition in a society committed to untrammeled growth, now suddenly is becoming a desideratum as Americans seek to avoid the plight of mass-man. The small social institution, be it a school or a governmental agency or a church or whatever, represents one of the few ways by which our long-cherished national dream and aspirations for genuine democracy can survive in a world of out-sized numbers.

Moreover, after laboriously burrowing through the research in the field and having undertaken its own inventory, the Committee feels certain that the disadvantages that accrue to smallness can be overcome more readily than can the intractable problems that face large schools in their efforts to become caring and humane institutions. Small schools can be good schools, indeed can become the best schools. But this can happen only if the leadership and staff in the small school make a conscious and determined effort to realize those values. This will entail the exercise of much educational imagination and some daring as well. But the final results could be overwhelmingly positive, providing our young people with a school setting tailored to their own human dimensions.

As the NCA Committee on Small Schools moves into the final stage of this particular project, it is sustained by the hope that its own modest effort may help the small school come fully into its own—not only within the ranks of the NCA Commission on Schools but within the entire NCA region. This is no trivial ambition, but then it seems evident that the small school is to play no small role in the schooling of our young people in the decades ahead.

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Appendix

NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

COMMISSION ON SECONDARY SCHOOLS

COMMITTEE ON SMALL SCHOOLS

Executive Secretary:
John A. Stanavage
5454 South Shore Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60615
Telephone: (312) 752-1516

INVENTORY OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN SMALL SCHOOLS

Dear Principal:

As the chief building administrator of one of NCA's smaller secondary schools (a school having a total enrollment of 300 or less in grades nine through twelve), we are certain that you share with us an abiding regard for the small schools in our region. The Committee on Small Schools, which was established by the NCA Commission on Secondary Schools three years ago, has as its major intent the reinvigoration of small schools through efforts to help them build upon their strengths and overcome the limitations inherent in smallness. It is to that end that the committee has developed his Model Small School Project.

An integral part of that project has been the determination of practices that have proved effective within small schools. We asked Dr. Everett D. Edington of New Mexico State University to do preliminary research on this for us, identifying those practices considered exemplary in small schools. At this point, then, we wish to ascertain those schools in which these practices are to be found.

Obviously the person to go to for this information—and for anything else in the school—is the principal. Hence we ask your cooperation in completing this inventory form. It should not take you long to do so, but the potential value of the information for your many NCA colleagues could be great. It is our intention, once the inventory has been completed, to make this information widely known to all our small school members.

The following instructions should help you complete the inventory accurately:

1. Please mark those practices that are in operation in your school to such an effective degree that you would encourage your colleagues to observe them in practice. Bear in mind that this is not a counting survey, but an effort to identify for our NCA small school membership those schools in which specific practices are being implemented with a conspicuous degree of success.

2. Please add to the inventory any practices or programs in your school that are not listed here but which you consider to be exceptionally helpful in assisting a small school to build upon its strengths and circumvent the constraints imposed by smallness.

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3. In completing this form, please use the following code:

   A = *In Current Operation*

   This indicates that the practice is currently in effect in your school and is working so well that you would encourage inquiries about it from fellow educators. Do not use this symbol unless you consider the practice to be exemplary as far as your school is concerned.

   W = *Written Materials Are Available*

   This indicates that you have written materials concerning the program or practice as effected in your school and that you are willing to send this material to any inquiring school upon request.

   D = *Dropped*

   This indicates that the practice was tried fairly recently in your school (within the last three years) but was discontinued subsequently.

   Note that a practice may be marked both *A* and *W* should both apply.

4. If the materials you have on any exceptionally successful practice/program are not too voluminous, we would appreciate your sending one copy of each to the Chicago NCA office along with your completed inventory. Please feel free to add, either on the inventory or supplementary to it, any comments you wish concerning the promises and problems of small schools.

5. Please return this inventory form directly to the NCA Chicago office before December 15, 1973: The address is:

   NCA Commission on Secondary Schools
   5454 South Shore Drive
   Chicago, IL 60615

The NCA Committee on Small Schools is grateful for your cooperation in our joint task of preserving and enhancing the small school as one of the fine educational resources in American education.

Appreciatively yours,

Committee on Small Schools
NCA Commission on Secondary Schools

1 November 73

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COMMISSION ON SECONDARY SCHOOLS/
NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION

5454 SOUTH SHORE DRIVE • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60615

INVENTORY OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN SMALL SCHOOLS

In completing this form, use the following code:
A = In Current Operation W = Written Materials Available D = Dropped
(Please see the accompanying letter for complete instructions.)

Reporting Principal _____

School _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

* * *

A. *Organization and Structure*

_____ 1 Consortium of several schools to share resources, personnel, or programs (such as multidistrict computer use, special education programs, etc.) Please indicate the components being shared:

_____

_____ 2 Pairing with a neighboring small school for shared resources, personnel, programs. Please indicate the components being shared:

_____

_____ 3 Fully integrated K-12 program (staff, program, students, etc.).

_____ 4 Multiple grade levels in classes.

_____ 5 Completely non-graded program.

_____ 6 Alternation of classes on an annual basis.

_____ 7 Alternation of classes on a semester basis.

_____ 8 Shared time with a neighboring school—one school offering part of the total program and the other the remainder, in a complementary fashion. (Not necessarily restricted to a public school/church-related school sharing.)

_____ 9 Cross-graded classrooms.

_____10 Four-day week; fifth day for professional meetings or student activities.

_____11 Differentiated staffing.

_____12 Occupational area school sharing enrollment with the small school.

_____13 Summer school for subjects not taught during the regular year.

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_____ 14 Modifying the schedule in a substantive fashion to permit greater flexibility.

_____ 15 Cooperative purchasing with some other small schools or districts.

_____ 16 Shared specialist personnel, such as nurses, psychologists, etc.

_____ 17 Shared library resources, print and non-print.

_____ 18 Shared subject area supervisors (employed by more than one district).

_____ 19 Joint inservice programs with neighboring schools.

_____ 20 Shared guidance and counseling services.

_____ 21 Shared teaching personnel who spend two or three days in one school and the alternate days in another school.

_____ 22 Credits granted on bases other than the Carnegie unit.

_____ 23 Sharing educational resources with non-educational institutions or agencies. Please describe the program briefly:

_____

_____ 24 _____

_____ 25 _____

B. *Curriculum and Program*

_____ 1 Mini-courses.

_____ 2 Quarter electives. (In all or in specified subjects.)

_____ 3 Independent study.

_____ 4 Multiple levels of accomplishment. (Options within the same class.)

_____ 5 Learning packages.

_____ 6 Work-study programs. (Or cooperative work programs.)

_____ 7 Integrated courses. (Such as Science I, Science II, etc.)

_____ 8 Programmed learning.

_____ 9 Combined subjects, such as art, music, U.S. history, and literature in one multiple-credit course.

_____ 10 _____

_____ 11 _____

C. *Instruction*

_____ 1 Courses via instructional or educational television.

_____ 2 Directly supervised correspondence courses.

_____ 3 Action education. (Students out in the community, using community resources and community personnel in formalized learning endeavors.)

_____ 4 Students tutoring for credit, either their peers or younger students.

_____ 5 Video and audio-tape courses.

_____ 6 IPI or some other form of individual progression.

_____ 7 Courses taken on college campuses, but for high school credit.

_____ 8 Courses on film.

_____ 9 Individual study. (As contrasted with independent study.)

_____ 10 Peer teaching.

_____ 11 Team teaching.

_____ 12 Amplified-telephone instruction.

_____ 13 _____

_____ 14 _____

D. *Miscellaneous*

_____ 1 Extended field trips, for specific credit.

_____ 2 Wide use of paraprofessionals.

_____ 3 Itinerant teachers. (Teachers who visit the school for a week, or month, or semester in order to teach special courses.)

_____ 4 Mobile science labs.

_____ 5 Mobile vocational education facilities.

_____ 6 Mobile industrial arts labs.

_____ 7 Mobile special classrooms such as language labs, art rooms, etc.

_____ 8 Special inservice workshops to help teachers function better in small schools.

_____ 9 Special inservice programs for principals to help them perform better in small schools.

_____ 10 Town-meeting student government.

_____ 11 Visiting consultant for an extended period of time.

_____ 12 The lighted school-house: full community school concept in effect.

_____ 13 Aggressive recruitment of teachers for a small school milieu.

_____ 14 Extensive home visits by staff, leading to closer home/school cooperation.

_____ 15 Student exchange programs (week, weeks) with schools in other regions or other settings.

_____ 16 Shared materials mailed or transported between schools.

_____ 17 School/community library. (Library supported and staffed jointly by the school and the community.)

_____ 18 Effective practices to promote student participation in the school's activity program.

_____ 19 _____

_____ 20 _____

_____ 21 _____

_____ 22 _____

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE CHICAGO ADDRESS OF THE COMMISSION ON SECONDARY SCHOOLS BEFORE DECEMBER 15, 1973. THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Publications of the Commission on Schools . . .

that may be of interest to you. Free single copies of all except the first three items are available from the Executive Secretary of the Commission on Schools, 5454 South Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60615.

The NCA Evaluation Guide for Secondary Schools:
A Workbook for the Self-Study and Evaluation Review ($8.00)

Leadership for Quality Evaluation:
A Manual for the Evaluation Team Chairman ($.50)

A Public Information Kit on NCA Accreditation and Evaluation ($1.00)

Policies and Standards for the Approval of . . .

. . . Secondary Schools

. . . Junior High/Middle Schools

. . . Independent College-Preparatory Schools

. . . Vocational/Occupational Secondary Schools

. . . Separately-Administered Adult High Schools

. . . Optional Schools/Special Function Schools

. . . Elementary Schools

Procedures for the Evaluation of Secondary Schools

Procedures for the Evaluation of Junior High/Middle Schools

A Primer on NCA Accreditation: Its Rationale, Its Nature, Its Structure

A Profile of the NCA Commission on Schools

Improving Education Through School Evaluation

Partners in Quality Education: The Junior High/Middle School and the NCA

Partners in Quality Education: The Vocational/Occupational Secondary School and the NCA

Partners in Quality Education: The Adult High School and the NCA

Partners in Quality Education: The Elementary School and the NCA

Directives and Guidelines for the Improvement of School Evaluation

Rules of Procedure of the NCA Commission on Schools

An Instrument for the Evaluation of the NCA Evaluation Team's Written Report